

**THE DAYTONA BEACH NEWS-JOURNAL LETTERS TO THE EDITOR AND COMMUNITY VOICES FOR 2015** In the section below, the Letter at the top of the page is the most recent.

*Published: Wednesday, December 30, 2015*

<http://www.news-journalonline.com/article/20151230/OPINION/151239976/101031/OPINION02?p=5&tc=pg>

### **Trump's danger**

I recently returned from Malaysia, a peaceful Muslim country, with a new perspective on American politicians and mass shootings.

Donald Trump's dramatic statements are certainly “entertaining,” and following violent episodes provide a chance for comic relief.

However, his inability to effectively communicate with world leaders about crises in the Middle East, ISIS , the European refugee crisis or troubling environmental shifts concerns me. His lack of a welcome in Israel raises a big red flag.

His experience negotiating tough business transactions is surely impressive. However, they happened here, with fellow Americans who speak English and share similar cultural values. The playing field is much different overseas.

He is hoping to become the most powerful person on the planet, at a very stressful time in our history.

Citizens here and abroad need a leader who is patient, flexible, open to considering different opinions. They need someone who listens well and painstakingly reflects on issues. And my young grandchildren deserve the opportunity for a bright future.

Marilyn Sapsford

Ormond Beach

---

<http://www.news-journalonline.com/article/20151218/OPINION/151219552/101031/OPINION02?Title=Letters-Chitwood-s-attitude-Social-Security-flatline-guns-at-school>

### **Chitwood's attitude, Social Security flatline, guns at school**

**Friday December 18, 2015**

#### **CHIEF'S TRIP SHOULD SPARK CHANGE**

I was glad to see Daytona Police Chief Mike Chitwood took a trip abroad to Scotland to “Study policing without guns,” as reported on the front page of Saturday's New York Times.

“We in American policing are missing the boat in the respect for human life, altogether,” Chitwood said, according to the Times, which added: “The notion drilled into new officers, he said, 'better to be judged by 12 than carried by six' — is misguided.”

“I've watched great cops get into a shooting that destroyed their lives,” Chitwood continued during the comments portion of the program. “They may have been exonerated, but they knew their careers were over, they became alcoholics, lost their marriages, because they couldn't handle that they took someone's life, even if it was a good shooting.”

The conference was the brainchild of Chuck Wexler, executive director of the Police Executive Research Forum, who attended a leadership program in Scotland last year. Wexler is quoted as explaining when he saw police recruits there with no guns in their belts. “It hit me like a ton of bricks,” he told the Times.

I wrote a previous letter criticizing Chitwood for saying a prisoner's suicide saved taxpayers money, but I think people should be interested to know that he went and what he had to say. That's what we need in America. We need to take a look at policing and make some changes.

**Leigh S. Montgomery**

Ormond Beach

---

<http://www.news-journalonline.com/article/20151214/OPINION/151219812/101031/OPINION02?p=1&tc=pg>

**December 14, 2015**

## **GOODWILL AND GUNS**

Whatever has happened to Christmas, the holiday that is supposed to celebrate the birth of the Prince of Peace?

Only in America could 185,345 people apply for background checks while buying firearms on Black Friday, the largest number ever recorded — as reported in The News-Journal's Dec. 6 story, “Gun dealers see surge in sales.”

Only in America would a Nevada lawmaker post her family Christmas photo on Facebook showing all of her family members, including a 7-year old boy, holding guns.

Only in America, could a 4-year-old girl be shot and killed sitting in her father's truck during a road rage incident.

And, hopefully, only in Astor could there appear in a neighborhood yard a blow-up decoration featuring a camouflage-dressed snowman holding, yes, you guessed it, a gun!

Where will it stop? Can we expect that some Christmas Eve soon, Santa will be accompanied on his rounds by a squad of armed vigilantes rather than by his reindeer?

Merry Christmas, “Peace on Earth, Goodwill toward men” — just not in America?

**Preston Garrison**

Astor

---

<http://www.news-journalonline.com/article/20151213/OPINION/151219847/101031/OPINION02?p=3&tc=pg>

**December 13, 2015**

### **Presidential travel**

The Dec. 8 letter titled “Secure or not?” stated that in “Emperor” Obama’s earlier trips, the presidential entourage included “500 staff, including 200 Secret Service agents, a team of six doctors, the White House chef and kitchen staff with the president’s own food and water.” This was part of a column printed by the Scripps Howard News Service in 2009, based on British news reports, and has been forwarded in numerous chain emails through the years. In its investigation, FactCheck.org has been unable to independently verify any of the figures. The White House does not comment on details of presidential travel logistics, typically citing security concerns.

There have also been other chain emails with charges about improper travel expenses by the president and his family, which FactCheck.org says are either unverifiable or false.

**Thomas B. Hilburn**

Ormond Beach

---

**December 9, 2015**

<http://www.news-journalonline.com/article/20151209/OPINION/151209534/101031?p=2&tc=pg>

### **Jaw-dropping vote**

How could the Republicans in Congress vote against putting people already identified as a possible terror threat on the “no fly list,” created and maintained by the United States government's Terrorist Screening Center, on the gun background “No buy list”? This is totally irresponsible.

It is time that the Republicans in Congress looked out for American citizens, not the National Rifle Association. This is not a Second Amendment issue. It is a “what is right for Americans” issue.

**Harry R. White**

Ormond Beach

---

<http://www.news-journalonline.com/article/20151011/OPINION/151019961/101029?Title=Remove-the-stigma-from-mental-illnesses>

**Preston J. Garrison**

**REMOVE THE STIGMA FROM MENTAL ILLNESSES**

***Published: Sunday, October 11, 2015 in Community Voices***

As someone who spent most of his 40-year career working on mental health advocacy, education, and public policy with the National Mental Health Association (now Mental Health America) and the World Federation for Mental Health, I commend Mental Health America of East Central Florida for its efforts to educate the public through its Walk with Dignity (The News-Journal, Oct. 6). I also commend The News-Journal and reporter Eileen Zaffiro-Kean for the coverage of this event.

Stigma, misinformation, and ignorance regarding mental illnesses, and the people who experience them, remain far too prevalent in America and add to the difficulty of individuals with mental health problems seeking and receiving the treatment they need.

Saturday was World Mental Health Day, an international mental health education and advocacy event sponsored by the World Federation for Mental Health, celebrated in over 100 countries. World Mental Health Day was first organized in 1992 and has grown to be the largest worldwide mental health education and advocacy campaign. The theme of this year's World Mental Health Day campaign is "Dignity in Mental Health." Information about the campaign can be found at the WFMH website at [www.wfmh.com](http://www.wfmh.com).

Of all the social and physical health problems and diseases, mental illnesses remain the least understood and usually only get the public's attention when a major incident of violence occurs. The stigma that has historically been associated with people who have a mental illness or disorder is worsened every time the "talking heads" on radio and television rant about "crazies" and "nuts" and cast blame on the mental health system for not preventing these rare, yet horrible, occurrences.

Even so, states (including Florida) continue to grossly underfund community mental health services, refuse to accept expanded federal Medicare and Medicaid funding, create barriers for uninsured residents to obtain insurance through the Affordable Health Care Act, and generally ignore the fact that 1 in 17 Americans (14 million persons) live with a major mental illness such as depression or bipolar disorder.

For state governments to ignore the intervention and treatment needs of the 64 percent of young people and the 57 percent of adults with mental illnesses who receive no treatment is a public policy disgrace that only leads to negative, and sometimes fatal, consequences.

Worst of all, according to Mental Health America's "The State of Mental Health in America 2016" report, more of our youth are experiencing depression, yet 64 percent of young people with depression receive no treatment, and only 22 percent with severe depressive disorders receive any kind of consistent outpatient treatment. Very few states have instituted mental health screening programs in schools, and when such programs are attempted, parental objections and pressure often cause them to be curtailed.

It's well past time that people who struggle with serious mental health problems and severe mental disorders are treated with the dignity they deserve, can access the treatment that they need in order to live productive lives, and can be free of the public stigma that often discourages them from seeking treatment and support at an early stage of their illness. Hopefully, events such as the Walk with Dignity and World Mental Health

Day can raise awareness of what is needed to make our communities and our lawmakers more aware and more supportive of people who live with a mental disorder.

— Garrison lives in Astor.

---

<http://www.news-journalonline.com/article/20150924/OPINION/150929821/101031?Title=Letters-Suicide-s-always-tragic-uniforms-make-sense-faith-and-cheating-and-more>

**September 24, 2015**

## **EVERY SUICIDE'S A LOSS**

The suicide death of anyone is regrettable and tragic.

The suicide death of a suspect, while in Miami police custody for the killing of two local university students, is no exception.

I take great exception with the comment made by Daytona Beach Police Chief Mike Chitwood on the front page of the Sept. 20 News-Journal.

“He saved the state the expense,” Chitwood said about the suicide death. The police are responsible for the safety of all prisoners within their jurisdictions.

If we are silent and Chitwood's attitude prevails in our police department, we can expect to see more “costeffective” prisoner suicides.

Leigh Montgomery  
Ormond Beach

---

**September 21, 2015**

<http://www.news-journalonline.com/article/20150921/OPINION/150929986/101031?Title=Letters-Student-success-testing-s-stakes-help-9-11-heroes-clerk-s-actions>

## **PREPARING STUDENTS WELL**

Preparing students well

It was most encouraging to read your “Building better workers” piece in the Sept. 15 News-Journal Local section. It's really wonderful to know that so many of our high schools are offering this type of technology, so that the students can figure out early on what they might, or might not, be interested in being involved in as adults.

When I went to high school many years ago, there were choices of similar kinds of training in our high schools, but by the time my children were in high school there was no such thing.

I wonder whether there are any statistics on the career success rates for those who have graduated during the time since Mainland High School started this in 1995.

Marti King

Ormond Beach

---

**September 14, 2015**

<http://www.news-journalonline.com/article/20150914/OPINION/150919863/101031/OPINION02?p=3&tc=pg>

## **IMPOSING BELIEFS**

Regarding the story about the Kentucky gay marriage controversy, in the Sept. 5 News-Journal: The Kentucky clerk Kim Davis, who refused to issue marriage licenses to gay couples, was compared to the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. by her attorney. That is, both were willing to go to jail in an effort to counter laws with which they disagree.

I would like to point out that there is an essential and major difference between the two situations:

King's purpose was to allow people who had been denied their civil right to receive these rights.

Davis went to jail in an attempt to deny people their rights.

I respect her right to her religious beliefs. I do not respect her attempt to impose her beliefs on others.

**Roger L. Patterson**

**Ormond Beach**

---

**September 8, 2015**

<http://www.news-journalonline.com/article/20150908/OPINION/150909749/101031/OPINION02?p=1&tc=pg>

## **End to tragedy**

A horrible human tragedy is unfolding in the Aegean and Mediterranean seas. Thousands of people are dying, attempting to escape misery and death in their own country. The Mediterranean sea has become a human graveyard.

The European continent alone is unable to resolve this situation. The world community must not allow thousands of people to die in an attempt to find freedom and life outside of their own countries. We all know how difficult life is in Syria, Iraq, Libya, and other places in that part of the world.

What can the international community do about this horrendous problem that has been created, in many ways, by outsiders in those countries? The only way to resolve this is through the United Nations. Many Americans harbor a negative opinion about the U.N., but we have a responsibility as human beings to find a way to resolve this tragedy. People from all walks of life — religious and spiritual, business, sports leaders and artists — should participate and sit at the table with the U.N. to work together and formulate a plan.

If a solution cannot be found through negotiations, the U.N. must take action militarily. The time has come for the most powerful nations in the world to act together. Why are we capable of having good business relations with almost everybody? As a human being, I am ashamed that we emphasize more on profit and money than on life itself.

Being from the island of Chios, situated geographically in the middle of this turmoil, I feel forever proud to be Greek — knowing that Greece was the light of civilization, beginning 3,000 years ago. It saddens me to see darkness and chaos replacing hope, beauty and civility in that part of the world.

**Panos Stroumpis**

**Daytona Beach Shores**

---

**July 19, 2015**

<http://www.news-journalonline.com/article/20150719/OPINION/150719562/101031/OPINION02?p=5&tc=pg>

### **Rainbows for all**

I agree with the perspective of a July 13 letter-writer (“A lighted insult”) that “there are many citizens who oppose” same-sex marriage, and support them speaking up about it.

However, I believe the rainbow lighting of the White House in celebration of the recent Supreme Court decision made a positive statement about our great country.

The Declaration of Independence declares that “all men are created equal.” It does not specify that all heterosexual men (and women) are created equal.

Gays and lesbians have suffered ostracism, denial of privileges or promotions, and even death in the last century.

To finally be offered the legal right to marry is a monumental shift. Now in addition to being “created equal,” they can be treated equally.

This can spur other groups experiencing discrimination to continue marching forward.

Marilyn Sapsford

Ormond Beach

---

**June 27, 2015**

<http://www.news-journalonline.com/article/20150627/OPINION/150629603/101031?p=2&tc=pg>

### **Provide jobs for youth**

The suffering in our country caused by unemployment and homelessness is catastrophic. Add to that the paralysis of government, and blind efforts to fight in the Middle East.

We need a program like the Civilian Conservation Corps, founded by President Franklin D. Roosevelt, to get our people back to work. Full employment would solve a lot of other problems.

**Patricia Tugas**

Ormond Beach

**May 30, 2015**

<http://www.news-journalonline.com/article/20150529/COLUMNS/150529452/1116/LIVING07?Title=Religious-communities-enable-people-to-find-meaning-in-their-lives->

### **The Spiritual Side**

Religious Communities enable people to find meaning in their lives. Article about Rev. Craig C. Roshaven

I first joined a Unitarian Universalist church in 1974. Ever since I've been an active member of a UU congregation. The subject of church comes up naturally in conversations with friends and co-workers.

REV. CRAIG C. ROSHAVEN

Many years ago, a co-worker, a nurse by the name of Donna, reacted to my mentioning church by saying "Church. Church. Church?" She was bemused by the fact that someone she knew was involved in a church.

She couldn't imagine church as part of her life. I can't imagine my life without it. She couldn't imagine church as a blessing, as a source of joy instead of a source of guilt and sorrow.

There are a lot of people, especially young people, who don't identify with any religion. A third of adults under 30 check the box "none of the above" in religion surveys. These "nones" include agnostics, atheists, and those whose religion is nothing in particular. More than a third of Americans never attend a worship service.

But, over the centuries, religious communities have enabled people to find meaning in their lives. Religious communities help us realize and remember that one's worth and dignity depends on more than one's value in the marketplace. They foster a sense of



community and belonging. They call us to care for the least among us. But it seems more and more will never get the chance to learn about the value of being part of a religious community.

In 1568, the first Unitarian minister, Francis David, proclaimed "Faith is a gift from God and can't be forced. We need not think alike in order to love alike." That is still our guiding principle today. We are a radically inclusive faith.

Unitarian Universalism is different than most other religions in that we don't have a creed. We don't require our members to think alike. But, implicit in Francis David's admonition that "we need not think alike in order to love alike" is an expectation that we will love.

Most Americans have never heard of us. As a result, when someone does happen to get to know us, they often say, "Where have you been all my life?"

We greet each other on Sundays and other days with glad eyes, warm smiles and outstretched hands. We value one another's humanity. We cherish babies, care for our children, teach ourselves and our young what we think is important, celebrate rites of marriage and birth, visit and care for one another in times of trouble, and mark the passage from life to death by gathering together to remember, to celebrate, and to mourn. We value one another not on the basis of paycheck or occupation but on the basis of a shared faith in the worth and dignity of every person.

What difference do we hope to make? All the difference in the world. The difference that a caring, committed group of faithful people can make by giving of themselves to each other and those around them. The difference that each one of us can make at home, work and with family by loving our neighbor, all our neighbors. The difference that a full heart and a ready hand make in a world that is too often ugly and indifferent.

Church, Donna asks, in a questioning way, as if it's some obsolete, vaguely distasteful relic. Yes, I answer, with conviction and certainty, Church. Come join us.

The Rev. Craig C. Roshaven is interim minister of the Unitarian Universalist Society of the Daytona Beach Area. To suggest a topic or clergy person in Volusia and Flagler counties for this feature, contact Faith editor Denise O'Toole Kelly at 386-681-2214 [ordenise.kelly@news-jrnl.com](mailto:ordenise.kelly@news-jrnl.com).

May 10, 2015

<http://www.news-journalonline.com/article/20150510/OPINION/150509499/1031/OPINION02?p=2&tc=pg>

## **THE ARROGANCE OF MANKIND**

I have followed the debate on driving on the beach for a long time. A couple years ago, I sent a letter that was published, and it hasn't changed. I am against driving on the beach. I disagree with the decision of the VolusiaCounty Council simply because it is biased and it is not smart. It appears to put a bandage on the issue without solving the problem. Is the council prepared to make another deal with the next developer who wants to remodel or rebuild? When will this practice stop?

However, after reviewing this issue for so long, I've come to the conclusion that mankind has been very arrogant. Most of us think that we own and can control everything.

I have a very different perspective on this matter. We are not the owners of the planet Earth.

We are only visitors here temporarily. Let's not forget that we share this planet with all living creatures and we are not the only ones with communities. Survival of the animal and plant life relies on their relationship with Earth. The planet belongs to posterity.

We have our state and federal constitutions, which provide us with certain rights and protection. All life on this planet has an unwritten constitution provided by Mother Nature. We must respect the laws of Mother Nature. Some of you may call me a dreamer, but don't discount my message without thinking about it. I predict, in the end, driving on the beach will be a thing of the past. The winner will be Mother Nature.

### **Panos Stroumpis**

Daytona Beach Shores

#### **THE DAYTONA BEACH NEWS-JOURNAL LETTERS TO THE EDITOR and COMMUNITY VOICES FOR 2015**

#### **THE DAYTONA BEACH NEWS-JOURNAL LETTERS TO THE EDITOR and COMMUNITY VOICES FOR 2015**

#### **THE DAYTONA BEACH NEWS-JOURNAL LETTERS TO THE EDITOR and COMMUNITY VOICES FOR**

**April 2, 2015**

<http://www.news-journalonline.com/article/20150402/OPINION/150409915/1031?p=4&tc=pg>

#### **CREATE TRUE STUDENT-ATHLETES**

I am an ardent college basketball fan, but I was distressed by the March 18 News-Journal opinion piece about college athletics by Steve Siebold, who argues that we need to pay college athletes for their work, and that football and basketball college players should unionize. He contends that many millions are made by colleges, and that their coaches are paid handsomely.

It seems to me that it would be better for the colleges to support them in graduating from college and pursuing successful non-athletic careers.

The News-Journal has recently highlighted the successes of the Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University basketball program. This is a program that emphasizes the "student, person, and player." Not only do Embry-Riddle athletes excel in athletics, they couple this with completion of degrees in demanding programs (in which they achieve with above-average grade-point averages), and they do good work in the Daytona Beach area.

Maybe a better approach for big-time athletics would be to adopt the Embry-Riddle approach.

**Tom Hilburn**

Ormond Beach

---

**April 1, 2015**

<http://www.news-journalonline.com/article/20150401/OPINION/150409971/1031/OPINION02?p=2&tc=pg>

### **A STAND-OUT CANDIDATE**

There is a special election on April 7 for the state representative District 24 seat which encompasses most of Flagler County, St. Johns County and parts of Volusia County. I recently met a Democratic candidate for the seat, Adam Morley, and was very impressed by his ideas and his passion for the people he wants to represent in Tallahassee.

A lifelong resident of St. Johns and Flagler counties, Adam embodies the hometown's core values of community-mindedness through various volunteer and leadership positions he has held since his youth. He expressed to me his desire to safeguard the amazing quality of life the district brings to its residents and visitors alike.

As a small business owner of a recycling company he and his wife owned until recently, Adam symbolizes the hard-working entrepreneurial spirit and understands the importance of a stable economy in building a strong community for families living in the district.

Adam also believes that Florida, the Sunshine State, should be a leader, not the follower, in the sustainable energy arena, reducing our dependence on fossil fuels. He is also an unabashed advocate of a strong educational foundation that will produce future leaders for our community, thus securing a bright future for all of us.

I believe Adam Morley will make a superb representative for District 24. Go, Adam!

**Kimberly Park**

Holly Hill

---

**February 28, 2015**

<http://www.news-journalonline.com/article/20150228/OPINION/150229437/1031?p=3&tc=pg>

### **Focus on building strength**

I can't believe it, but for once I'm agreeing with the Cal Thomas column on your Feb. 25 editorial page. Thomas shames Rudy Giuliani for questioning President Obama's patriotism and love of America. Giuliani whines that Obama "doesn't love me" or the other attendees at Manhattan's 21 Club private dinner, but that doesn't mean our president doesn't care about our country.

Fortunately, Thomas remembers the empty slogan of the 1960s Vietnam era: “Our country — love it or leave it!” for the hollow and jingoistic rhetoric it was. Surprisingly, Thomas even extends that critical gaze to the Iraq war. Amazing!

Thomas suggests a debate on “what has made America great and worth loving” in the effort to strengthen our country. It would and should be a worthy debate. And certainly, we can celebrate the America in which an individual without 21 Club connections could become president.

**Carolyn West**

Ormond Beach

---

February 28, 2015

<http://www.news-journalonline.com/article/20150228/OPINION/150229437/1031?p=2&tc=pq>

### **Human nature and hope**

We continue to live in a world with significant amounts of national, ethnic, and religious conflict, economic inequities and environmental problems. Is there any hope for a better world? While some social scientists have provided some evidence of improvement (e.g., Steven Pinker, regarding historical per capita decreased violence), we certainly continue to experience ample global problems. Human nature seems to be a likely major culprit.

The eminent biologist Edward O. Wilson has provided some good definitions of human nature: “... the full set of innate behavioral predispositions that characterize the human species.

“The instinctual part of the interaction between instinct and environment.

“The hereditary regularities of mental development that bias cultural evolution in one direction as opposed to another, and thus connect the genes to culture.”

Consistent with his concept of sociobiology, he has emphasized the biological foundation for all forms of human behavior.

Wilson has also made it clear that he is talking about predispositions in regard to evolutionary genetic programming (“hardwiring”), not sole determination of human culture. Further, in his concept of gene-culture co-evolution, the hardwiring is seen as interacting with learning and environmental experiences in the development of human culture. This co-evolution process provides for the possibility of moderating the effect of hardwired predispositions, which can be either positive or negative. To the extent that the moderations would be positive (e.g., through educational programs aimed at reducing aggression and conflict and increasing cooperation, empathy, and altruism) there is hope for a better human future. Neuroscience research in recent years concerning brain function, especially plasticity of the brain, has been increasingly supportive of this co-evolution potential.

It seems reasonably possible that positive modifications of human nature may well provide one of the most hopeful possibilities for a better world.

**Dan Kennedy**

Ormond Beach

---

**February 22, 2015**

<http://www.news-journalonline.com/article/20150222/OPINION/150229909/1031/OPINION02?p=3&tc=p9>

Museum boosts creativity

The news coverage and community support for the recent addition to the Museum of Arts and Sciences is highly deserving of much thanks.

This venture appears to be of the first impact. Artists recognize the paintings are where they should be: on display. Daily and yearly attendance will provide the most impact. Artists also know that education, inspiration, and enjoyment may follow.

Creativity requires this.

**Don Kennedy**

Ormond Beach

---

<http://www.news-journalonline.com/article/20150203/OPINION/150209889/1031/OPINION02?p=3&tc=p9>

**February 3, 2015**

**THE POPE IS RIGHT**

I read Leonard Pitts' column ("Pope's wrong to seek free-expression limits," Jan. 21) in regard to Pope Francis' reaction to the Charlie Hebdo incident in Paris. I believe that Pitts misinterpreted Pope Francis' intention of advocating less freedom of expression. I hope we all agree with the pope that it is not a good idea to insult somebody else's religion. I do not believe that the pope is advocating against freedom of expression by taking that stand. The pontiff, who I believe is one of the most level-headed people in the world, used his good common sense, which seems to be lacking in many people.

Trying to constantly be politically correct, we very often lose the forest by looking at the tree. It appears that what we say, in order to present a point of view, many times becomes counterproductive if we are careless in our presentation.

Most of us believe in democracy and freedom of expression, and we condemn terrorists for such horrendous crimes against humanity. However, in this case it was not smart for the Charlie Hebdo magazine, based upon the previous experience it had, to intimidate extremists by satirizing their faith. We always must remember that the terrorists are very unreasonable people who, in my opinion, are mentally ill and in need of psychiatric help. This can only fuel the fires of their recruitment for more terrorists to join the cause. My recommendation is for us all to get behind Pope Francis and trust him. He has the most difficult mission, which involves bringing us together from many religious persuasions. This is one of the most complicated times in the world's history.

## **Panos Stroumpis**

Daytona Beach Shores

---

### **Letters to the editor for Friday, January 9, 2015**

<http://www.news-journalonline.com/article/20150109/OPINION/150109528/1031/OPINION02?Title=Letters-to-the-editor-for-Friday-January-9-2015>

### **OPTIMISTIC ABOUT HOMELESS PLAN**

The well-written letter entitled "Questioning the homeless plan," (Dec 27) raises issues that require a response.

The letter discusses the qualifications of consultant Robert Marbut, hired by the city of Daytona Beach to develop a plan for reducing the number of homeless people in Volusia County. The letter states: "Dr. Marbut, after not brushing his teeth for two days, armed himself with a pack of cigarettes and a lighter then hit the streets to find answers." As if this was the extent of Marbut's knowledge.

Marbut has provided assistance for the homeless in 21 states, plus Washington., D.C. and Mexico City, visiting 584 sites. He has helped dozens of cities to reduce homelessness, and has published a book. The quality of his work is nationally recognized; he was a White House Fellow during the last Bush administration. His local research, including the distributions of the homeless in Volusia Count, was a complement to his vast knowledge of the subject. Such information is crucial to making valid recommendations for Volusia County.

The writer also asks if anyone vetted Marbut's previous winning plans. A number of local city and county officials have visited another shelter in Pinellas County, based on Marbut's work. Pinellas officials continue to report very positive results. This organization continues to operate this shelter and reports success.

Dividing street people vs. homeless people is naive. It ignores the complicated reasons people become, and stay, homeless for varying periods of time — unemployment, chronic illness, mental illness, addiction, and other reasons.

As for the millions of dollars to be spent, a major reason for such shelters is to reduce spending on unnecessary court, jail and hospital use by homeless people. As Volusia County Judge Belle Schumann and others have attested, it is far more expensive to send people to jail or a hospital than to provide them with the kind of shelter Marbut proposes. How much money are we spending on the very wealthy International Speedway Corporation and the track?

The initial expense for the shelter is very tiny in comparison, and it will save money for the county and the cities.

**Roger L. Patterson**

Ormond Beach

**Dr Morris Carter** has been a member of UUSDBA since 1980. He was featured in an article in the Daytona Beach News-Journal Feb 21,2014.

The News-Journal has given permission to post the following link to that article

<http://www.news-journalonline.com/article/20140221/NEWS0402/140229868/0/search>

[Link to article](#)